

Community Policing

Each model provided community policing with a philosophy and many officers embracing it. This model emphasizes two responsibilities and philosophies for both police and community members as well. The first is a dynamic, graphical representation of community policing in which neighbourhoods are ranked from least safe to most safe. Police officers respond to places that police visit many times a day after public calls for assistance. The goal of community policing is for communities to move toward ever safer and more secure conditions - and when they get there, stay that way.

Crime Prevention That Works

Ontario's Police Services Act says that crime prevention is the first duty of police services. This community policing model distinguishes between relatively safe neighbourhoods where situational crime prevention measures like target hardening and community watch strategies work; and areas where broader social problems make such measures impracticable. The model emphasizes crime prevention through social development in areas where police are most often called for assistance. It guides all community partners to select crime prevention strategies that work.

Building On The Past

The 1970s-80s saw community policing interpreted as improved public relations. The '90's added strategies for consulting with community people on police priorities. Today's model stresses non-police community members partnering with police in making, and keeping their neighbourhoods safe and secure. It highlights police tactics for stimulating and supporting community members to do this. Such tactics require police services to add skills and capabilities; and reconsider how they organize and operate. Today's vision requires that police become better partners with community members.

A Continuum Of Service

Community policing refers to a continuum of police service in all communities - a range of tactics and strategies to help the community be and remain well, safe and secure. What officers do depends upon the particular situation in which they find themselves. Sir Robert Peel's "...the police are the people and the people are the police..." reflects that police and all community members share responsibility for community policing. Particular roles vary. But ensuring everyone's safety, security and well-being requires everyone's combined efforts.

Enforcement & Crime Suppression

Generally, people in less safe areas are more vulnerable to crime. Therefore, crime enforcement is most needed in these communities. Police officers need to consider such tactics as:

- Heavy patrolling
- Targeted enforcement
- Monitoring crime reduction
- Initiating problem-solving

Only after crime is reduced can police start effective mobilization and prevention strategies.

Community Mobilization & Crime Prevention

Personal, social and economic wellbeing are the cornerstones of a safe and secure community. Where any of these are deficient, people are more vulnerable to crime, anti-social behaviour and victimization. There, we need police to consider such tactics as:

- Mobilizing community partners
- Problem-oriented policing
- Monitoring crime prevention

Crime prevention through social development will reduce the demand for police assistance.

Community Engagement & Liaison

In the safest neighbourhoods people can overlook potential threats to safety and security. Here it's a good idea for police to use such tactics as:

- Liaising with neighbourhoods and groups
- Public education on risks and prevention
- Monitoring special, at-risk groups
- Partnering in early intervention

Situational crime prevention measures work best in these neighbourhoods because people have the time, resources and abilities to implement them.

Community Safety & Consultation

Where people are relatively safe and police are rarely called for assistance, people usually have the skills and abilities to keep it that way. Therefore police are rarely required to do much more than point out potential risks to community security and encourage community people to deal with them. Police can consider such tactics as:

- Engaging community leaders
- Consulting with community groups
- Monitoring hazards

Community safety is everyone's business.